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**WASHINGTON, D. C.**

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**ROSA AND HER SUITORS.**

A TALE OF SWEDISH DOMESTIC LIFE.

BY EMILIE F. CARLEN,  
Author of "One Year of Widdow's," "The Bride of Omburg," &c.

TRANSLATED BY ELBERT PERCE.

CHAP. VIII.

**Rosa and the Professor.**

Christmas was approaching, and with it increased activity in all the departments of the merchant's household, who were busily engaged in making preparations for the approaching festival. The hostess had her hands quite full, and consulted alternately her housekeeper, upon whose judgment she had great reliance, and her prime favorite, Mr. Mauserstedt, to whom the high distinction was awarded of being admitted to her sanctum, where the little mysterious meetings for important affairs were transacted. Numberless were the little arrangements which Mauserstedt had to charge himself with, for the Christmas amusements of the children. However, he patiently submitted to his fate, and allowed Madame Widen to dispose of his evenings as she thought best; and, in return, had the pleasure of sitting opposite Rosa at table, and occasionally of exchanging a few words with her—a privilege which he would gladly have purchased with an additional two hours of night watching.

And Rosa worked, too, almost night and day, that everything might be ready. The Captain appeared to have resolved to practice the extraordinary piece of self-denial of leaving her in peace. During the last week, he made a visit of only a few minutes daily, and she would have been most difficult for one who had seen him at this period to have thought otherwise than that he deemed himself at the gates of Paradise, sitting on the light pinions of hope and love. If, however, they had seen him in his chamber alone, the picture which presented itself would have been somewhat different. It seemed as if he had a double existence, for many anxious hours he paced to and fro in his apartment, biting his lips and twisting his fingers, reflecting upon the past and the swift lapse of the two appointed months, and then the finale of the drama.

"Oh, the devil lay away with such a finale!" Rosa would mutter to herself, as she glanced at the brutes of creditors—and mine, and all others—are enough to drive a man crazy. Is this proper behavior for me? Not believe an officer's word? I cannot, at any rate, calculate upon getting married for three or four months—not a day earlier, unless my next attempt to overcome the merchant's disinclination succeeds better than that of yesterday. I will not receive him until he has paid me, my dear Captain. Have you spoken with your uncle yet? and what says he? The devil and all, my dear brother-in-law, says nothing of the sort that my worthy father-in-law would expect of me. He says, however, that he will take good care how he does that. However, I do feel a little curious to know what he will say, when the business cannot be arranged, and my dear nephew, has to make a little extra-difficult journey, to seek out the money advanced by the purchase of his commission. He says, he will see to it, and that he will not let him be deceived. He says, he will take it into his head to despise me so thoroughly as not to say a word. My Heaven forbid such a misfortune! If he is silent, I will give up all hope of having a marriage, and I cannot survive that. No, no! I must set my brain to work, and try and find some remedy, or be ruined!"

At this point, a confusion, the image of which, and thoughts of her own weakness and unworthy conduct towards her, would arise in his mind. That which pained him most, however, was the consideration that he had been unable to endure his loss with such admirable patience. That was, in his opinion, what the fervent affection he had formerly, and even still, entertained for the chosen one, who had been so dear to him, and with whom—unhappy child, how dear and inconstant. They always were so, Hilma, formed no exception.

It was on a dull, but tolerably mild, September afternoon, that Rosa Widen pulled the bell at the outer door of the Professor's room. The old housekeeper, Madame Brun, opened it, and conducted her to the inner door of his own peculiar apartment.

"Will I disturb him, dear Madame Brun?" asked Rosa, in a low and timid voice.  
"No, no, miss; the Professor has had his nap, and is in the best possible mood. Go right in—as in—at once!"

And so saying, Madame Brun left the little hall, and with her heart beating violently, Rosa entered the door of the Professor's room.  
"Who is there?" came in a deep voice from the Professor's living.

Rosa quickly opened the door, and entered. It was the Professor's writing room and study—unchanged for more than twenty years—dark and dusty, with deep blue hangings and having every corner stuffed and piled so full of books and manuscripts, that there was hardly room for a chair.

Professor Ling was seated in an extremely old-fashioned easy-chair, before a large table covered with dusty pamphlets and innumerable long, gray papers. He was enveloped in a cloud of gray smoke, which he had been puffing his pipe. His feet were clad in worn-out slippers, and he wore a red and white night-cap on his head, and a large pair of spectacles upon his nose.

As Rosa entered, the Professor arose as quickly as his feet would allow. He extended his hand in a friendly way to his young visitor, and in a tone unbecomingly pleasing for him, said:  
"Welcome, my dear child. Do you come alone? Surely Ferdinand is with you? The latter might have told me that you were going to honor me with a visit."

"Pray, forgive me, dear sir, if I come inopportunist," implored Rosa. "Ferdinand is not at home—he has gone to his study. You are all the more welcome, that your visit is on my account. But now go into the parlor, and amuse yourself with my books, which you can find. It is warm and cheerful there, and I will come immediately."

Rosa bowed, and went into the next room, which was larger, better furnished, and pleasant than the other; it also contained a number of rare old plants, which the Professor took great pleasure in collecting about him; and many other curiosities of all descriptions. Rosa found means to amuse herself.

Meanwhile, the Professor seated a little silver bell, which stood upon his writing table, and Madame Brun, at his well-known sound, hastened to his master's room.

Prepare some extra good coffee," said the old gentleman, "and serve it in the gilt East India service, and bring some of your nicest cake, also."

The housekeeper left the room, to attend to his orders.

"Now, now, Madame Brun!" called her master, after her, "do not be in such a hurry! You are not to see me here! Do you not see I am here in my old mood, my dear child? Bring me some of your nicest cake, and a slice of your best bread, and I will take it into the hall. I can scarcely

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